



**Minutes of the VSS Board Meeting No 66**

**VSS, Seatem House, 28-32 Alfred Street, Belfast**

**Board Meeting Type: Quarterly Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 21 January 2020 at 10:00am**

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**Board Members Present:**

Oliver Wilkinson (OW)	Board Member (Chair)
Patricia Haren (PH)	Board Member
Bertha McDougall (BMcD)	Board Member
Stephen McIlveen	Board Member

**VSS Officers in Attendance:**

Andrew Walker (AW)	Interim Chief Executive Officer
Tara Lewsley (TL)	Head of Corporate Services
Melissa McCartan (MM)	Business Support Officer

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**A Apologies**

Apologies were received from Richard Solomon (Board Member) and Beverly Clarke (Board Member).

**B Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 December 2019 were approved.

**C Action Points**

AW provided an update in relation to the outstanding action points:

**02.05.2019 – AP3:** Chair to arrange completion of all member appraisals. It was noted that all Board appraisals have now been completed and sent to Head of Corporate Services.

**MSFM 4.4.3:** Ministers to meet Board. The Board agreed to issue another letter of request to The Executive Office.

**Action points arising from 21 January 2020:**

**21.01.20 – AP1:** CVS commissioner to attend VSS Board to provide an update twice per annum. 20/21 dates to be arranged.

**21.01.20 – AP2:** A facilitator to be sourced from Chief Officers Forum to be engaged for the facilitation of Board effectiveness assessment and to discuss the Board appraisal form. Head of Corporate Services to issue invite.

**D Conflict of Interest**

**D1 Supplier List / Agenda Items**

The Board noted the Supplier List.

**D2 Declaration Form**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**E Chairman's Report**

OW presented the Chairman's Update Report and highlighted his engagement with the Commission for Victims and Survivors.

**F Quarter End December 2019**

**F1 CEO/AO Exception Report**

The Chair invited the Interim CEO to present this report.

AW provided an update on the key strategic issues. It was noted that reporting in quarter 3 has raised concerns over the achievement of 4 targets, as follows: The targeted outcome in respect of the Regional Trauma Network (RTN) will not be achieved by 31 March 2020. It is expected that a period of co-design will

commence in early 2020 but there will not be operational activity within 2019/20 as envisaged within this key action.

Progress in respect of the Peace IV frameworks targets against the delivery plan for 2019/20 (1-to-1 Literacy & Numeracy, Volunteering and Social Isolation) continues to be less than planned. However, when considering the overall target within the PEACE IV project, VSS is confident that resilience will achieve its overall target.

The group call in respect of Social Isolation has been rescheduled until 2020/21. It was noted that six VSS funded groups have started their initial health check and will have the option to progress to full accreditation thereafter.

### **Delivering on outcomes**

AW provided an update on delivering on outcomes, drawing attention to the following achievements:

It was noted that there has been significant engagement between VSS, TEO, DoH, HSCB, CVS and funded organisations over the last number of months in relation to the Regional Trauma Network. Key issue of intention for RTN as envisaged at the time of SHA was discussed with political representatives, who were invited to attend an engagement meeting on 9 January 2020. Broad agreement on a way forward through facilitated co-design sessions - expected to take place in Q4 19/20.

Since the launch of the Social Isolation framework in 2019/20, 100 awards have been made to 98 individuals to date. 15 individuals have been provided with social aids, such as mobility scooters, with a further 83 individuals supported to access leisure and social activities aimed at reducing social isolation.

AW provided an update in relation to the Victims Payment Scheme. It was noted that VSS submitted a response to the Public Consultation on 26 November 2019. AW advised the Board that there has been ongoing engagement with TEO, CVS and the Sector regarding the roll out of the scheme and how to support victims and survivors with the process as it evolves.

It was noted that the results of the Equine Pilot, undertaken in Q2 2019-20 have now been collated. AW advised the Board that the outcome of this pilot was extremely positive, with 90% of participants showing a clinical improvement in symptoms. It was noted that VSS will now consider options for future inclusion of Equine Therapy within its services.

## **Key focus areas for Quarter 4 (January – March 2020):**

**Regional Trauma Network** - VSS will work with all stakeholders to achieve broad agreement through facilitated co-design sessions in Q4 19/20.

**Preparations for additional funding under PEACE IV** – VSS still await the outcome of SEUPB consideration of submission for additional funding/change in project end date. It was noted that this outcome is expected within January 2020.

**Victims Payment Scheme** - AW advised the Board that VSS will submit a costed proposal to TEO outlining resource needs of VSS and its funded organisations - relating to both administrative support and Health and Wellbeing.

**Historical Institutional Abuse** – It was noted that VSS await a decision on arrangements for provision of Health and Wellbeing services to victims and survivors of HIA. If decided that VSS has a role, work will commence at an agreed date for roll out of services.

## **Risks – key changes since last update:**

AW advised the Board that there have been three additional risks added in this quarter, as follows:

**STG55** – Risk that comprehensive victim centred approach to provision of support to victims and survivors considering application for Victims Payment is not in place ahead of launch of scheme on 31 May 2020.

**STG56** – Risk that Health and Wellbeing services are not in place for victims of HIA within an appropriate timeframe.

**STG57** – The needs of the bereaved are not being met within current schemes.

It was also noted that funding is currently suspended in respect of two organisations. AW updated the Board on these cases, identifying the actions taken to attempt to ensure that service users' needs continue to be met.

## **G Board Sub Committees**

### **G1 Audit and Risk Committee Update**

The Head of Corporate Services provided the Board with an update from the last Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

It was noted that the GDPR audit report resulted in a satisfactory audit rating and the final report has been circulated to the ARC committee.

## **G2 Health & Wellbeing Committee Update**

AW provided the Board with an update from the last Health and Wellbeing Committee meeting.

It was noted that the committee approved the following framework/policies which were due for revision;

- Clinical Governance Framework
- Protect Life Policy and Procedures
- Lone Worker Policy

AW advised the Board that an external resource has been contracted to review the Clinical Governance Framework and Policies and to assist two funded organisations to achieve BACP accreditation.

## **H Board Work Plan and Development**

### **H1 Board Attendance/Work Plan**

TL presented the following document and highlighted Board attendance at the Victims Forum in October 2019 and Protect Life training in November 2019.

### **H2 Board Training Update and Questionnaire**

The Board noted this paper.

### **H3 Board Self-Assessment Update**

The Board noted progress to date in relation to the Board Self-Assessment action points:

Chair and VSS Interim CEO are to attend a workshop this month to introduce this guidance and begin process. This action point remains open.

It was agreed that the issue of the Board taking assurance of maintenance of standards (following positive Victims Choice review) should be considered for inclusion in the next years Internal Audit programme.

## **I Standing Agenda Items**

### **I1 Compliance Update**

AW provided the Board with an update on the suspected fraud cases open at the quarter end. It was noted that one case is awaiting a CCNI Final Report.

It was noted that there were no instances of whistleblowing in the quarter ended December 2019 and no open cases carried forward.

There were no new Ombudsman Complaints made in the period and no open cases carried forward.

There were no ongoing governance reviews and no AOs received in the period.

There was one FOI open at the quarter end, which was considered by management and closed thereafter.

There was one complaint received on 01.11.19, which was partially upheld and closed thereafter on 19.01.19.

### **I2 Client Risk Update**

The Board noted this paper.

### **I3 Data Protection Update**

The board noted that one data sharing agreement is still outstanding from a VSP funded group and has been passed to DPO for resolution. It was also noted that VSS has since sought advice from internal audit and are reviewing the content of the current Data Sharing Agreement template with a view to taking further legal advice.

## **J Communications**

**21.01.20 - AP4:** VSS to invite Brown O'Connor to attend the Strategic Board meeting in February 2020 to review the VSS Communications plan.

## **K AOB**

The board noted the passing of Jean Orr, who was extensively involved in the work of the Wave Trauma Centre, and expressed their deepest sympathies.

The chairman asked the Board if they had any additional questions or concerns to raise. Nothing further to note.

**L Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday 18 February 2020, 10:00am at Seatem House, Belfast.